

NATIONAL ASSISTED LIVING
WEEK—SEPTEMBER 10-16, 2000

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2000

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, the face of aging has changed dramatically. Americans are living longer, more active lives. Involvement in independent activities such as work, hobbies, and social life can add quality—and years—to a senior's life. Yet, while independence and control over their lives is as important to seniors as their physical and mental health, many people avoid planning for senior housing until a pending crisis, putting their own freedom of choice at risk and straining family relationships. Just as people have learned to plan ahead for their financial retirement, it should become commonplace to plan for long-term housing and care.

In recognition of National Assisted Living Week, September 10–16, please join me in inviting all seniors to take the time now to talk openly with their families about their senior housing options and preferences, just in case supportive housing ever becomes necessary for them.

We all value the right to live in our own homes as long as possible and to make our own decisions. Americans must plan ahead in order to protect their preferences and maximize their lifestyle options later. There is a rich variety of senior housing and care options to choose from, so it's important to become fully educated.

One of these options, assisted living, has become a cornerstone for senior care. An assisted living residence is a special combination of housing, personalized supportive services and health care designed to meet the needs—both scheduled and unscheduled—of those who require help with activities of daily living.

I urge all Americans to learn more about assisted living and how seniors can age in a loving home-like environment with dignity and independence.

CONSUMER ACCESS TO A RESPONSIBLE ACCOUNTING OF TRADE ACT

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2000

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Consumer Access to a Responsible Accounting of Trade Act of 2000.

This bill aims to sever the funding link that has enabled the murderous rebels in Sierra Leone and Angola to wage their wars against civilians; that has helped bring a thug to power in Liberia; and that is sustaining eight nations fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

This has been a top priority for a coalition of 70 human rights organizations, led by Physicians for Human Rights, and it has become an urgent matter for the diamond industry, whose tokens of love face being exposed as symbols of butchery.

The industry and activists both support a plan to block diamonds mined in conflict zones from entering the legitimate diamond trade. Many details remain to be ironed out, but the industry is working on that. Unfortunately, they are running into intransigence from some segments of the industry and some nations. Because of the nature of the system they have devised, substantial participation is necessary to make it work.

My bill aims to support the industry's efforts and expresses the Sense of the Congress that some effective system of preventing smuggled diamonds from being traded as blood-free ones is urgently needed and directing the Administration to make this a higher priority. The bill also encourages technology that will find a more traditional approach to this problem. Finally, it implements embargoes imposed by the United Nations and takes steps to make them more effective.

Mr. Speaker, we owe passage of this bill to innocent Africans—both those caught in the wars over diamonds, and those who depend on the legitimate trade in South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia and will be hurt by a consumer backlash against the blood trade.

But we also owe it to Americans to pass this bill.

American consumers play a significant role in the diamond trade, because they buy 65 percent of all diamonds. They clearly have no intention of supporting brutal wars—after all, their intention is to buy tokens of love and commitment—but that is precisely what they are doing.

American taxpayers also deserve better: they have funded more than \$3 billion in humanitarian relief to the people of these four nations who are caught up in war—at the same time rebels there have earned \$10 billion to pay for weapons and material to keep the same wars going.

The CARAT Act aims to empower Americans to lend their consumer might to efforts to bring peace to Sierra Leone, Angola, Liberia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. It is measured and responsible legislation that deserves immediate action by the 106th Congress, and I urge our colleagues to support it.

AMERICAN SERB HALL, THE FIRST
50 YEARS

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2000

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I wish to join in the tribute to a true southside Milwaukee landmark, the American Serb Memorial Hall, as the community celebrates the hall's 50th birthday this month.

Located at South 51st Street and West Oklahoma Avenue, on Milwaukee's southside, Serb Hall, as it's commonly known, has been a fixture in the city for the last half century for wedding receptions, banquets, lunches and dinners, political rallies and yes, even bowling leagues. When constructed in 1950, Serb Hall was by far the most complete and modern facility of its kind on the south and southwest side of Milwaukee. The hall was expanded in

1987 to accommodate increasing business and renovated in 1999.

The hall was originally dedicated on September 1, 1950 to honor the local members of the Serbian orthodox faith who served in the American armed forces. 15 of those young men lost their lives in defense of our nation. They are honored today in a full-wall memorial in the lobby of Serb Hall. I was honored to attend the very moving dedication ceremony for that memorial.

Any mention of Serb Hall is not complete without focusing on two very traditional events—the Friday fish fry and visits by political dignitaries. The first fish fry was held at Serb Hall in 1967 and the lunches and dinners continue to this day supplemented by a drive-through window and carry-out service. The line of cars in the drive-through oftentimes circles the parking lot and can even extend into the street during the Lenten season.

Without a doubt, many individuals seeking major political office realize the historical and cultural significance of holding a rally at Serb Hall. From Milwaukee mayors, police chiefs, US congressmen and Wisconsin Governors to United States Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Reagan, Bush and Clinton, all have spoken at Serb Hall either as elected officials or candidates.

It is my pleasure to wish the Milwaukee Serbian community all the best as you celebrate 50 years of Serb Hall success. Best wishes for the next 50 and well beyond.

ACKNOWLEDGING LIFETIME OF
PUBLIC SERVICE BY MR. EDWIN
BEARSS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 12, 2000

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Edwin Bearss, a constituent of Virginia's Eighth District, who has recently retired after an impressive forty year career with the National Park Service and distinguished service in our nation's military.

Since the birth of our nation, Virginia has been a cornerstone in American history, especially during the Civil War. The majority of the Civil War's significant engagements occurred on battlefields in Virginia. Ed Bearss illuminated the valuable, living history found on the Civil War battlefields of Virginia and elsewhere in our country. Those who have been privileged to hear Mr. Bearss recount the vivid history of our nation's Civil War consider him a national treasure.

Ed Bearss began his service to our country during World War II as a Marine fighting in the Pacific. After recovering from wounds he suffered during battle in New Guinea, he took advantage of the G.I. Bill and received a degree from Georgetown University, as well as a masters degree in history from Indiana University.

In 1955, Mr. Bearss joined the National Park Service and began to share his knowledge and passion for Civil War history. As a historian at Vicksburg, Mr. Bearss' research led to the discovery of the lost ironclad Cairo and